K

Rt. 12, Frederick, Md. 21701
5/19/77

Mr. Syd Stapleton
Political Rights Defense Fund
Box 549 Cooper Station
N.Y.C., N.Y. 10003

Dear Mr. Stapleton,

Enclosed is a letter I have just received from the National Archives. It indicates a much greater volume of records on Michael and Ruth Paine and their families than I had realized. The cost of $346 also is greater than I had visualized.

There were family SWP connections and Michael held a security clearance at Bell Helicopter. Ruth Paine, with whom Marina Oswald resided temporarily, was unusually cozy with the FBI, I believe and I am sure that others will agree that her waiving of the Oswald rights for them is not what one would expect of ACLU types.

Whether or not 1700 released pages on these people plus an admitted 22 other Commission records that remain withheld is exceptional I leave to your judgement. This is a reflection of what reached the Commission. It need not mean all relevant records. However, I do call to your attention the claim to Exemptions 1,3 and 6. I presume you have had your own experiences with official interpretations of Exemption 7.

If you decide to get these records I can be of possible help. What I can do is make copies at no cost to you and have two others with some subject expertise go over them and see if they perceive what can be of usefulness. I would also do this myself. While I can advance the cost of the initial copies I would need that cost repaid. This is not only because I am without regular income. My own FOIA costs are hard to bear and when they start disgorging the records on me I'll have a real financial problem.

I sent Mr. Lamont what I have on file relating to Arnold Lewis Kessler. If you decide this cost is not justified when I can I'll make and send you copies of what I now have relating to the Paines.

As the records you have obtained are examined I would appreciate it if someone were alert to the possibility that I am in them, beginning in San Francisco in mid-December 1966. I was then invited to speak under the auspices of what was called the Citizens Committee of Inquiry. When I reached San Francisco I learned this was actually the SWP. Despite some heavy, public and professional red-baiting I did speak at Golden Gate Park and under SWP auspices, as I would today. Hal Verb, of whom I have written, made the arrangements. I recall the name of the chairperson as Sylvia Weinstein. There was an employee of the Longshoreman's union with whom Hal had me staying. I do not recall his name or that of his wife. I do recall them as sincere and thoughtful people. Also tolerant, because I worked around the clock. The man was not a Bridges supporter. However, this certainly would have caused an extra FBI interest because in the late 1930s I drank and dined with Bridges and his associates in Washington, drove them around there, etc. I also had a friendly relationship with his legislative representatives in Washington. This is also true of other union leaders of that period.

If these records contain obliterated names in connection with San Francisco talk shows of that period or for about two years afterward and relating to political assassinations it is not impossible they relate to me.

Sincerely,

Harold Weisberg